

Dear Friend,

Health care reform continues to take shape. Yesterday, an updated health reform bill was introduced based on the deliberations by three House committees and feedback from constituents and others. Information about the Affordable Health Care for America Act – including [full text](#) and a [bill summary](#) – can be found on my homepage. I am reminded about the need for health reform when reading the hundreds of [letters I receive](#) every week from those disserved by the broken health insurance system. Below are two more stories:

A Milltown resident wrote about her struggles with the Medicare prescription drug program. “It was quite a surprise to see what the 'doughnut' hole in the drug plan was all about. I am on several inhaler drugs that are now running me \$650 for a 3-month refill. I was careful as a widow to save for my retirement but this is going out the window very fast.” Each year, 7,900 seniors in New Jersey's Twelfth District face the coverage gap in Medicare's prescription drug benefit, after \$2,700 in prescription expenses, and must pay their full drug costs. The legislation being shaped in Congress would provide them with immediate relief by cutting brand name drug costs in the doughnut hole by 50 percent and ultimately eliminating this coverage gap – immediately closing the gap by \$500 and gradually closing the doughnut hole completely. Additionally, the bill would strengthen Medicare by removing co-payments and deductibles in Medicare for preventive services, to ensure diseases are treated at the earliest stage. In short, under the legislation, Medicare would be intact, only better.

A constituent from Marlboro contacted me about his daughter-in-law who was diagnosed with breast cancer. While she has good coverage, he believes she will have to stop working to go through treatments, causing her to lose her insurance. One of the principles of our reform effort is that you should never lose coverage if you lose your job. The new insurance marketplace (called the exchange) would ensure that you continue to have health coverage even if you are between jobs. You would have a choice of plans at group rates and help with the premiums for that insurance. Additionally, the bill would set a cap on the amount families with any coverage, whether it's employer-based or purchased individually through the new marketplace, have to pay out-of-pocket each year and would stop the practice of dropping coverage when treatment becomes too expensive to ensure that one disease never forces a family into bankruptcy.

Supporting our Troops

Special payments now are available to more than 185,000 service members who had their enlistments involuntarily extended since September 11, 2001, providing \$500 for each month they were held under what is called stop-loss orders. Service members can submit their claims through the [Army](#) , [Marine Corps](#) and [Air Force](#) websites. They can submit claims to the Navy by emailing NXAG_N132C@navy.mil . All applications must be submitted by Oct. 21, 2010.

Earlier this month, Congress continued and deepened our commitment to supporting the troops and their families when we passed the [Fiscal Year National Defense Authorization Act](#) . The [bill](#) , which the President has [signed into law](#) , provides a 3.4 percent pay raise for the troops, expands TRICARE health coverage for reserve component members and their families for 180 days prior to mobilization, and authorizes funding for travel and transportation for three designated persons, including non-family members, to visit hospitalized service members.

Communications Upgrades in Old Bridge

This weekend I met with Old Bridge Mayor Jim Philips, Police Chief Thomas H. Collow, and members of the City Council to announce \$500,000 I [secured](#) for the Township to improve its public safety communications system. The township officials requested the funds to ensure its communications system meets the kinds of standards called for by the 9/11 Commission in its report. I appreciate that Mayor Philips came forward with this request to improve his hometown's security, and I will always work to ensure that local law enforcement have the resources and tools they need to do their jobs. Click [here](#) for photos of the event.

Sincerely,

RUSH HOLT
Member of Congress

P.S. Just a reminder: I always want to hear from you, but please don't reply to this e-mail. Instead, please email me through my website at www.holt.house.gov , or call me at 1-87-RUSH-HOLT (1-877-874-4658) to let me know what's on your mind. Please also note that you may unsubscribe from this list by clicking on the "unsubscribe" link at the bottom of this

email.